

## House Resolution No. 848

**Whereas**, the members of the Missouri House of Representatives always welcome the opportunity to acknowledge milestone events in the histories of Show-Me State religious organizations that are dedicated to improving quality of life in local communities and neighborhoods through the excellence of their spiritual endeavors; and

**Whereas**, Temple Beth El was founded in Jefferson City, Missouri, in 1879 by nine German merchant Jewish immigrant men, E. Hochstadter, Louis Wolferman, Joseph Straus, Sigmund Vetsburg, Isaac Bodenheimer, Joseph Obermayer, Jacob Goldman, S. Straus, Max Rauh, Jacob D. Straus, Abraham Heim, and William Fishel, who organized the Congregation Beth El (House of God) as well as the Jefferson City Hebrew Cemetery Association; and

**Whereas**, on April 3, 1882, six members of the Hebrew Ladies Sewing Society, Carrie Bodenheimer, Emily Hochstadter, Matilda Wolferman, Hannah Straus, Carrie Vetsburg, and Minnie Goldman, provided funds to purchase a plot of land and construct the synagogue in the three hundred block of Monroe Street; and

**Whereas**, when completed one year later, Temple Beth El became the first Reform temple west of the Mississippi that would remain on its original site and be in continuous use down to the present time; and

**Whereas**, Temple Beth El was designed by prominent local architect Frank B. Miller, who also designed the Cole County Courthouse; and

**Whereas**, the original building had no running water, no bathroom, and no electricity and was constructed on a plot of land that cost \$250 to purchase; and

**Whereas**, Congregation Beth El has no Rabbi, so members take turns leading the services; and

**Whereas**, Congregation Beth El does have two Torahs, both of which are hand-written parchment scrolls that contain the first five books of the Bible, and the oldest of which was written in Germany sometime near the year 1811 and placed in the Temple by the synagogue's original founders:

**Now, therefore, be it resolved** that we, the members of the Missouri House of Representatives, Ninety-fourth General Assembly, join unanimously to applaud the history, goals, and accomplishments associated with Temple Beth El and to convey this legislative body's most heartfelt best wishes to Congregation Beth El upon the One Hundred Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the establishment of their religious institution; and

**Be it further resolved** that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of Representatives be instructed to prepare a properly inscribed copy of this resolution in honor of Temple Beth El of Jefferson City, Missouri.

Offered by \_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Jake Zimmerman  
District No. 83

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Rachel Storch  
District No. 64

I, Rod Jetton, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Ninety-fourth General Assembly, Second Regular Session, do certify that the above is a true and correct copy of House Resolution No. 848, adopted February 27, 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rod Jetton, Speaker